THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF) :

(a) and (b) In order to clear the rush of passengers in Maharashtra, Railways had arranged 444 special trains in the summer rush period of 1991.

Acquisition of Airbus A-320

179. PROF. K. V. THOMAS : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Airbus A-320 aircraft with the Indian Airlines at present ;

(b) the number out of these that are operational and their performance;

(c) whether there is any proposal to acquire more Airbus A-320 aircraft for the Indian Airlines; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA) : (a) and (b) At present, except for the two A-320 aircraft which are undergoing 'C' checks, all the other 16 aircraft in the fleet of Indian Airlines are available for operations. These aircrafts are being rotated and because of shortage of pilots, any 12 of them are flying on scheduled services every day.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Under the supplementary purchase agreement of 5-6-1989, Indian Airlines is due to acquire 12 more Airbus A-320 aircraft.

Allotment of LPG Agencies

180. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of LPG agencies allotted during 1991 ; and

(b) the criteria followed thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) : (a) and (b) Letters of Intent for dealership given by the various oil companies during 1990-91 are being reviewed by the Government.

Sambalpur-Talcher Railway Line

181. SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the construction work of the Sambalpur-Talcher railway line is behind schedule ;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the action being taken for its speedy completion ; and

(c) by what time the project is likely to be completed ?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF) : (a) and (b) On the Talcher-Sambalpur new B.G. line (172 km) 34 km length Talcher-Angul (18 km) and Sambalpur-Maneswar (16 km) was targetted for completion during 1991. However, due to local law and order and other problems with the Orissa Government these sections could not be opened. Work is at an advanced stage and these sections are expected to be opened during the current financial year.